

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

I've become very uneasy about the absence of diverse viewpoints in major media outlets such as radio and TV... Progressive views do not get aired. Period. (Except in a battleground like: Firing Line, etc.) There is precious little objective analysis of events except in the context of sound-byte mentality, no history, no accountability. Networks are driven by the interests of their advertisers. This is not how a "free and independent" media should function... All programs are riddled with commercials like swiss cheese, damaging the viewer's ability to maintain concentration on the presented material. I believe the excess commercialization of our "airwaves" has also contributed to an extreme "dumbing down" of our children (and their parents!).

Only a few people own these media outlets. When Reagan's FCC Commissioner overturned the "Fairness" doctrine and eliminated the healthy PA's (which used to be a just and reasonable requirement of broadcaster's responsibility to the public), we witnessed a terrible and dangerous diminution of our democracy.

Without access to a strong INDEPENDENT media, there really IS NO democracy, only the rich and powerful enforcing their unchallenged will on a tremulous, cowering public. That condition amounts to SUBJUGATION.

SUGGESTION: Vigorous support is needed for the Creation of a People's Network (which used to be "Public Broadcasting Corporation" or PBS, but alas, it receives little financial support from our Government, although the Government seems to find much more wasteful and useless and dangerous ways to use public money...)

-- Allow citizen groups to have special/guaranteed access to a range of frequencies to enable strong local progressives to present their views.

-- A nominal DVD, VHS and movie rental fee could be applied universally (a national fee/not tax) which would help fund such endeavors.

Ref. Questions 6, 7: Cable TV HAS NOT contributed to "program diversity" where it matters, in an intelligent appraisal of local/state and federal government policies. The only station even comes close to approaching this goal, by being an "eye on the process," is CSPAN, which isn't even available to ALL THE PEOPLE.

Speaking of cable (a VERY sore point with me), why CAN'T WE SPECIFY WHAT WE WANT TO VIEW???? I know there may be some logistical problems why we may not be able to have access to everything we want, but I feel robbed every time I pay my cable bill! \$60/month for a modest sampling of commercial-ridden frequently unwatchable "programming."

Anyway, the cable experiment has been vastly disappointing.

Ref. #8: Commonly owned media currently is failing to provide the kind of independence needed in a vibrant democracy.

And, if anything, our "democracy" is technically moribund. 39% of eligible voters breaks down to something like a little over 20% to quality as a "mandate" by the current administration.

Enough!!!!!!